

The “best-fit” approach

The best-fit approach relies on teachers using criterion-related assessment practices effectively. When assessing a student’s work, teachers should assess each descriptor strand individually (starting with level 0) until they reach a descriptor that describes an achievement level that the work being assessed has not attained. The work is therefore best described by the preceding descriptor. Once this has been completed for each descriptor strand being assessed, an overall picture of the student’s achievement will emerge.

Where it is not clearly evident which overall level descriptor should be awarded, teachers must use their judgment to select the level descriptor that best matches the student’s work overall. The “best-fit” approach allows teachers to select the achievement level that best describes the piece of work being assessed. It is important to remember when doing so that a student does not have to achieve against all of the individual descriptor strands in a band level to be awarded an overall level in that band.

If the work is a strong example of achievement in a band, the teacher should give it the higher achievement level in the band. If the work is a weak example of achievement in that band, the teacher should give it the lower achievement level in the band.